

VZCZCXRO9327
PP RUEHDBU RUEHLH RUEHPW
DE RUEHIL #1570/01 1000817
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 100817Z APR 07
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8311
INFO RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT PRIORITY 2205
RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ASTANA PRIORITY 0090
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0266
RUEHKB/AMEMBASSY BAKU PRIORITY 0119
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK PRIORITY 4126
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE PRIORITY
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 7000
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 5440
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0706
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 4607
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT PRIORITY 2938
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 5500
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 1979
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 0273
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 2132

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ISLAMABAD 001570

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/02/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PK](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT MUSHARRAF MEETS WITH COMMANDER USCENTCOM

Classified By: Charge Peter Bodde 1.5 (b), (d).

1. (C) SUMMARY: New U.S. Central Command Commander, Admiral William J. Fallon, met March 31 with Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf. They discussed Musharraf's participation at the recent Arab League Summit (disappointing), Musharraf's interest in engaging on Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts (as a go-between), his efforts to construct an alliance of moderate Muslim states (slow going), the situation in Iraq (Sunnis need to be given more), continuing concerns about Iran (too unpredictable), and the status of Pakistan-Afghanistan relations and a plea for better understanding of Pakistan's perspective (can't trust President Karzai). Admiral Fallon explored with Musharraf ways that the Government of Pakistan could improve security control and economic prosperity in the FATA and adjacent areas. Throughout the lengthy and substantive discussion, President Musharraf was relaxed and in command of the issues and only became highly animated when the talk turned to Afghanistan and the Pakistani media. END SUMMARY.

Moderate Muslim States Initiative

2. (C) On March 31, Admiral William J. Fallon, Commander USCENTCOM, paid his inaugural call on Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf. Musharraf opened by explaining his Moderate Muslim States Initiative to the Commander. (Note: Pakistan's Moderate Muslim States Initiative, in which like-minded nations work together toward defusing tensions in Israel/Palestine, Lebanon, and Iraq, includes Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, Malaysia, and Indonesia. End Note.) Musharraf said the Israel/Palestinian impasse was the "core problem" facing the Muslim world, including Pakistan. The participation of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt in the Moderate Muslim States Initiative notwithstanding, the President was not convinced that Arab states fully recognized the degree to which problems in the Middle East impacted non-Arab Muslim countries. Some Arab states also failed to

take Israel's needs and interests into account, exacerbating the problem, according to Musharraf. The President noted a need to encourage Israeli flexibility. He said that Muslim states, both Arab and non-Arab, should unite to seek a solution to the Palestinian question; Pakistan could play a role in working on the issue. He offered that Saudi King Abdullah would soon call a summit of the moderate Muslim states to discuss issues of concern, including the Palestinian question. Admiral Fallon agreed on the importance of Islamic unity to work toward real solutions to various problems.

13. (C) Musharraf believed more Muslim countries should be engaged in calming Iraq to help prevent sectarian tensions from spilling over into other countries. In particular, Syria should mend its ways and join the group of countries that are part of the solution, not part of the problem. In order for various interrelated Middle Eastern problems to be resolved, an agreement on the Golan Heights was crucial and a good reason to maintain dialogue with Syria.

14. (C) The Admiral said the support of Iraq's neighbors for President Maliki and his government would contribute importantly to strengthening Iraqi self-confidence and to helping Maliki and his government face the difficult challenges ahead. Musharraf said Maliki needed to show more resolve and courage. Iraqis must develop a political solution to current problems, which he suspected would involve a unified but highly decentralized Iraqi state. He added that Sunnis needed to be assured with "guarantees" on their key concerns. He warned feelingly against over-strengthening the Shias, which he said would ultimately benefited Iran.

ISLAMABAD 00001570 002 OF 003

Iran

15. (C) Musharraf said he spoke with the Iranian Foreign Minister at the Arab League Summit in Riyadh two days earlier and urged him to resolve the crisis over the British naval personnel immediately. Musharraf counseled the Iranian FM that Iran should, in general, "avoid confrontations."

Pakistan and the Taliban

16. (C) Musharraf launched into an explanation "to correct misperceptions" about Pakistan's role in the Afghanistan conflict. He said that blaming only Pakistan for problems in Afghanistan was counterproductive, as well as wrong. The Government of Afghanistan's negative attitude toward Pakistan and its public criticism of Pakistan's efforts against the Taliban were "demotivating." He wanted President Karzai to pay more attention to the substance of the problem (which he thought was largely Pashtun disillusionment with the status quo) and less to "optics" like bashing Pakistan. He believed the Government of Afghanistan needed to offer the Pashtuns more "carrots" to balance the necessary security measures taken against militants.

17. (C) Musharraf reported that Pakistan's efforts against militants operating out of Pakistan were going well. Pakistan had isolated many of the foreign fighters, and the rules of engagement of Pakistan's military did not restrict it in any way from actions against militant targets. Musharraf reported that local tribal groups were making progress in their fight to remove foreigners (Uzbeks) from South Waziristan. He underscored his commitment to "choke off" support from Pakistan to Taliban elements in Afghanistan.

18. (C) The President stressed that some press reports of a new Bajaur political agreement were incorrect. Bajaur tribal leaders had approached government representatives with an "undertaking" that would promise various actions against militant activity. The government had not signed the agreement, despite press reports to the contrary.

¶9. (C) Musharraf explained that part of his plan to control the movement of Taliban forces was to emplace fences at two parts of the border that funnel personnel and materiel into Afghanistan. (He did not rule out the possibility of adding additional fences if these proved successful.) Another component of his plan was to provide development assistance in the FATA. Specifically, Musharraf said that political agents and other civil representatives needed quick access to funds to provide high-impact development projects.

Pakistan and Extremism

¶10. (C) Musharraf described the situation in Pakistan as "complex". The extremism pendulum -- which had swung far to the right under Zia -- was now swinging in the other direction, in his view. The President stressed the importance of a long-term strategy and expressed disappointment with international media articles that focused on short-term problems rather than long-term goals. Pakistan had embarked on a social development strategy that could be modified as needed; other countries should allow Pakistan to be flexible as it implemented its strategy.

¶11. (C) Musharraf predicted that moderate democrats in Pakistan would be victorious in the next general election -- a defeat for extremists. He suggested that the religious parties' percentage of the vote would drop from 18 percent in the previous election to around 5 percent in the next. He described recent reforms to Pakistani textbooks and curricula as important in the fight against extremism. Registering

ISLAMABAD 00001570 003 OF 003

madrassahs and cracking down on foreign students attending those madrassahs were also helping, and the passage of the Women's Protection Bill had been another significant signal that Musharraf's government was committed to rolling back fundamentalist Islam in Pakistan. The President said he looked forward to further legislation protecting the rights of women.

Economy

¶12. (C) Musharraf asserted that economic development was key to defeating extremism. He stressed the importance of maintaining economic growth and encouraging foreign investment.

Chief Justice Controversy

¶13. (C) Musharraf described the Chief Justice as a "complicated man" with a large ego. He accused the justice of nepotism and other acts of favoritism and stressed that the actions he had taken against the justice were completely constitutional. That said, he admitted his government's tactics in the early days of the controversy made the situation difficult.

¶14. (U) Admiral Fallon reviewed and cleared this cable.
BODDE